

# Five Components of Reading

## ***Fluency***

### **Description**

Fluency is the ability to read a text accurately, quickly, and with proper expression. During silent reading, fluent readers recognize words automatically. They group words quickly to help them gain meaning from what they read. Fluent readers read aloud effortlessly and with expression. Their reading sounds natural, as if they are speaking (*Put Reading First*, p. 22; National Reading Panel, pp. 3–6).

### **How Fluency Supports a Comprehensive Reading Program**

- Fluency is a critical aspect of reading performance and instruction. Nathan and Stanovich (1991) suggested that fluency “may be almost a necessary condition for good comprehension and enjoyable reading experiences.”
- Fluency is important because it provides a bridge between word recognition and comprehension. Fluent readers do not have to focus their attention on decoding unknown words, so they can focus their attention on what text means (*Put Reading First*, p. 22).
- Fluency helps students understand and interact with text.
- Reading rate impacts the amount of time students spend completing school-related assignments. Students reading at a slow rate become frustrated when assignments take longer for them to complete compared to their peers (Rasinski, 2000).
- Fluency strategies can easily be incorporated into a comprehensive reading program. “In most of the studies, the fluency work was relatively brief (15 to 30 minutes per lesson) and students who received these lessons were still engaged in other reading activities including comprehension instruction. Guided repeated oral reading and repeated reading provide students with practice that substantially improves word recognition, fluency, and (to a lesser extent) reading comprehension. They appear to do so, however, in the context of an overall reading program, not as stand-alone interventions” (National Reading Panel, pp. 3–20).

### **Scientifically Based Reading Research Related to Fluency**

- Repeated and monitored oral reading is an SBRR- supported instructional approach. Students read passages aloud several times and receive guidance and feedback from the teacher. Students who read and reread passages orally as they receive guidance become better readers. Repeated oral reading substantially improves word recognition, speed, accuracy, and fluency (*Put Reading First*, p. 24).
- Repeated oral reading improves the reading ability of all students throughout the elementary school years and helps struggling readers at higher grade levels (*Put Reading First*, p. 24).



- Fluency is not a stage of development (National Reading Panel, pp. 3–9). Fluency changes over time depending on what readers are reading and the amount of their practice with reading text (*Put Reading First*, p. 23).
- Students need instruction and practice in fluency as they read connected text (National Reading Panel, pp. 3–10).

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